



## SUCCESS STORY

# Partnerships make the difference

**With USAID's support, small community organizations are integrating into productive export chains**



USAID/BOLIVIA

*Embroiderers from Nueva Esperanza work hard to meet their export orders*

*USAID promotes strategic alliances between private sector and local organizations, providing employment and building export chains for Bolivians*

Wilma Rocha is a well-respected member of the *Nueva Esperanza* (New Hope) Mothers' Club, a community-based organization in the city of El Alto, one of Bolivia's most conflict-ridden and poorest cities.

Under her leadership, and with USAID's cooperation in providing sewing equipment and technical assistance in business planning and management, 75 women have moved from unemployment to embroidering high-end clothing for the largest textile exporter in Bolivia. This alliance with the exporter now generates orders of 15,000 garments each month. In addition, *Nueva Esperanza* has already received orders from two additional buyers to increase production by 30%. USAID is promoting sustainability by consolidating the enterprise. These women's earnings support this consolidation and improve their families' quality of life.

Promoting strategic alliances between small community businesses such as *Nueva Esperanza* and larger exporting firms is a key part of USAID's strategy to support value-added manufactured exports and job creation in urban areas such as El Alto. In this way, smaller businesses connect with export opportunities through the long-term market relationships of larger businesses, who can diversify their offerings to their clients through subcontracting smaller enterprises. USAID helps the small businesses improve productivity and quality or expand operations to meet the demands of these new markets. USAID's business development centers in El Alto, Cochabamba and Santa Cruz connect small producers with strategic partners, market opportunities and the techniques and skills needed to enhance competitiveness.

From October 2004 through September 2005, exports of the USAID-assisted firms generated \$10.4 million, equal to nearly half of all Bolivian exports in four focus sectors of textiles and apparel, jewelry, wood, and leather products. Export promotion efforts generated an additional \$729,800 in local sales and incorporated 31 new small businesses such as *Nueva Esperanza* into export chains. Through these efforts, USAID directly generated 291 new jobs in El Alto and poor areas of Cochabamba and Santa Cruz.

When linked with significant market opportunities, mothers' clubs and other small businesses can become important sources of income for their members. "Now, we have our own business and we thank God for this opportunity," says Wilma. By helping small businesses to connect with and effectively meet the demands of market opportunities, USAID is helping Bolivians like Wilma and her associates build a better future for their families.